

Native America: Did You Know?

1. That Indians did not become U.S. citizens until June 2, 1924, when Congress conferred citizenship on all Indians born within the continental limits of the United States.
2. That Federal laws prohibited the sale of alcoholic beverages to Indians until 1953.
3. That Federal laws prohibited Indians from owning firearms until 1953.
4. That only Tribal and Federal laws apply to Indians on reservations, unless Congress has provided otherwise.
5. Indians are subject to the same laws and requirements on “military service” as all other citizens
 - A. More than 8,000 Indians served in the armed service during World War I even before they were citizens.
 - B. More than 25,000 Indian men and women served in World War II.
6. Indians are no longer considered wards of the Federal Government; the Federal Government serves only as a trustee of the Indian property and not as a guardian of the person of the Indian.
7. There are approximately 286 separate land units (reservations, colonies, rancheries, and communities) today under jurisdiction of the Federal Government and owned by Indian people.
8. The Navajo reservation is the largest Indian reservation in the United States, covering approximately 25,000 square miles and spread over three states (Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah).
9. That the states of Arizona and New Mexico were the last two states in the Union to allow Indians to vote.
10. The smallest reservation is the Strawberry Valley Rancheria, in Yuba County, California, which covers one acre.
11. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) was established in 1824 within the Department of War.
12. In 1849, the BIA was transferred to the Department of the Interior where it remains today.
13. Ely Parker (Donehogawa) a Seneca chief and later a Brigadier General under General Ulysses S. Grant during the Civil War, was the first Indian Commissioner of Indian Affairs.
14. The first treaty between the United States and an Indian tribe was made in the year 1778 with the Delaware Indians.
15. Altogether the United States negotiated over 400 treaties with Indian tribes of which only 371 were ratified.
16. Congress ended treaty making with Indian tribes in 1871, until this time Indian tribes were treated as “Independent nations.”
17. The Dutch were the first to start the art of “scalping” in the United States in the 1600’s.
18. The Massachusetts Colony paid as much as \$12.00 per scalp for Indians in 1703.
19. During the Dutch Wars with the Indians in the New England area they built a wall across lower Manhattan Island, this later gave its name to “Wall Street.”
20. The Dutch bought Manhattan Island from the “Wappinger Indians” for approximately \$24.00 in the year 1626. Manhattan Island covers an area over 14,000 acres.
21. Indians served as guides in the early exploration of this hemisphere. Their trails became many of the main roads and railroads of today.
22. Sites of Indian villages were advantageously located on water way and trails and many of them became the locations of major U.S. cities, Chicago, Detroit, St. Louis, Kansas City, etc.
23. Indians assisted the English, French, Spanish, and other European peoples in the struggle for control of the new country.
24. His way of governing became the basis for many of the principles of American democracy.
25. Indians recorded their history in forms of pictographs.
26. Sixty percent of the foods eaten in the world were first harvested by American Indians.
27. Early Indian people had an extensive irrigation system that allowed them to grow many crops in the desert.

28. Before the white man came, Indians had developed agricultural skills superior to those of Europeans.
29. Indian people developed many ways to preserve foods.
30. American Indians set a sophisticated urban trading economy in motion when they unearthed undreamed of quantities of gold and silver.
31. At one time, Indians had made more advancements than Europeans in technology, which included utilization of cotton, rubber, dyes and related chemicals.
32. Indian people discovered the curative powers of quinine, the anesthetizing ability of coca, and the potency of a thousand other drugs, which made possible modern medicine and pharmacology.
33. Indian people had far more sophisticated calendars than the Europeans.
34. The Indians of Mexico had a mathematical system based on place numbers superior to the numerical systems then in use by the Spaniards.
35. Indian people had a highly sophisticated understanding of the sky before the white man came and had solar observatories.
36. Indian architectural accomplishments include the precision crafted building of Machu Picchu, the apartment dwellings of the southwest, hogans, earthlodges and tipi.
37. Native Americans are known as the first environmentalists because of their concern for all living things on Mother Earth and their extensive knowledge of ecology.
38. Indians view animals and all living things as their relatives.
39. Indian people have been called upon by NASA to help solve the global warming problem.
40. Earth, Air, Water, and Fire, the four elements, are highly respected by Indian people and are sometimes referred to as the Four Ancestors.
41. Indian people used science in the development of items such as tanning hides and making pottery.
42. Today there are Indian doctors, scientists, and astronauts.
43. Indian medicine men have been called to the National Institute of Health to help find cures for disease.
44. Indian people had their own religion(s) before the white man came. They were akin to other religions in the world in their beliefs of respect for each other.
45. Indian people developed and refined democracy and inspired the thinking of this country's founding father, Benjamin Franklin.
46. Charles Curtis, a Kaw Indian, was the Vice President under Herbert Hoover.
47. Benjamin Reifel, a Lakota from South Dakota, was a member of the United States House of Representatives.
48. Ben Nighthorse Campbell, a Ute from Colorado, was a member of the United States Senate.
49. Indian people had keen military strategies during their wars with the white man.
50. Indian people had their own forms of policing operations within their tribes.